

WELSH BOARD OF HEALTH

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17 JAN 1948

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Rural District Council of  
Newtown & Llanidloes

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# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

(R DAVIES-JONES, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., L.M.S.S.A.)

FOR THE

Year ended December 31st, 1944

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COUNTY TIMES. PRINTERS, WELSHPOOL.



TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE  
NEWTOWN AND LLANIDLOES RURAL DISTRICT  
COUNCIL.

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GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of your District for the year ended December 31st, 1944.

The Report is drawn up on the lines indicated in the Welsh Board of Health's Circular, and in order to economise time, labour, and paper, is confined to essential matters. I have omitted repetition of information given in previous reports.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

R. DAVIES-JONES,

Medical Officer of Health.

Maengwyn,  
Caersws, Mont.  
November 21st, 1945.

## STATISTICAL SURVEY FOR 1944.

Area, 151,231 Acres—that is 236.3 square miles.

Population—9,808.

Number of Inhabited Houses—2,585 as on January 1st, 1944.

Rateable Value—£19,736.

Sum represented by Penny Rate—£85 4s. 11d.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

## LIVE BIRTHS.

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate ... ..	83	80	163
Illegitimate ... ..	2	6	8
	—	—	—
Total ... ..	85	86	171

This gives a Live Birth Rate of 17.43 per 1,000 of population, that of England and Wales being 17.6.

The Birth Rate the previous 5 years was—

	This Area.	England and Wales.
1943 ...	16.06	16.5
1942 ...	17.03	15.8
1941 ...	15.1	14.2
1940 ...	14.7	14.6
1939 ...	15.5	15.

It will be seen that this is the highest birth rate for six years.

Legitimate Birth Rate for the district—16.61 per 1,000 population.

Illegitimate Birth Rate for the District—0.81 per 1,000 population.

This compares with the following figures for previous five years:—

	Legitimate Birth	Illegitimate Birth
	Rate.	Rate.
1943	... 14.9	1.1
1942	... 15.8	0.88
1941	13.98	1.1
1940	... 13.2	0.8
1939	... 14.9	0.62

## STILL BIRTHS.

	Male.	Female.	Total
Legitimate	... 4	3	7
Illegitimate	... Nil.	Nil.	Nil.

This gives a Still-Birth Rate of 0.71 per 1,000 population compared with 0.5 for England and Wales.

This compares with the following figures for previous five years:—

	This Area.	England & Wales.
1943	... 1.11	0.51
1942	... 0.59	0.54
1941	... 0.96	0.51
1940	... 0.89	0.55
1939	... 0.53	0.59

## INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The number of deaths of Infants under 1 year was 6 (3 males and 3 females), all legitimate—no death occurred among the illegitimate children. This gives an Infantile Mortality Rate of 35.08 per 1,000 live births for this area, compared with 46 per 1,000 live births in England and Wales.

Of these 6 deaths of infants 3 (males) were due to premature births, 2 (females) to Congenital Malformations, and 1 (female) to Bronco-Pneumonia at the fourth month.

1	of these deaths occurred in the 1st day of life.
2	„ „ in the first week of life.
1	„ „ in the 2nd week of life.
1	„ „ in the 4th week of life.
and 1	„ „ in the 4th month of life.

This Infantile Mortality Rate compares as follows with figures for previous years:—

			This Area.	England & Wales.
1943	...	...	62.89	49
1942	...	...	76.23	49
1941	...	...	75.	59
1940	...	...	40.3	55
1939	...	...	46.9	50

It will be noted that this is the lowest Infantile Mortality Rate for 6 years in this area, and that the mean of the Infantile Mortality Rates for this District for the 6 years (1939 to 1944 inclusive) compares closely with the mean for England and Wales for the same period—56 for this district compared with 50 for England and Wales. If this can be taken as an index of our health and social conditions we are below the average for England and Wales in this respect.

I find that in the last 6 years (1939 to 1944 inclusive) figures appear to show that as much care is bestowed antenatally and post-natally on Illegitimate children as upon Legitimate children in this district.

			Legitimate.	Illegitimate.
Live Births	...	...	894	62
Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	934	64.8
Still Births	...	...	45	3
Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	47	3.1
Infants Deaths	...	...	52	4
Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	54.3	4.1

The following figures are presented for future reference :

		No. of		No. of		No. of	
		Live Births.		Still Births.		deaths of Infants	
		Legit.	Illegit.	Legit.	Illegit.	Legit.	Illegit.
1944	...	163	8	7	nil	6	nil
1943	...	148	11	11	nil	10	1
1942	...	162	9	5	1	13	nil
1941	...	145	12	10	nil	12	1
1940	...	133	16	8	1	4	2
1939	...	143	6	4	1	7	nil
		—	—	—	—	—	—
		894	62	45	3	52	4

(It should be noted that the above are the actual numbers and not rates).

#### DEATHS.

During the year there were 120 deaths in the area, 63 males and 57 females. This gives a CRUDE DEATH RATE of 12.23 per 1,000 population, compared with 11.6 for England and Wales. This is the lowest Crude Death Rate for the area for 5 years as shown by the following tables:—

#### CRUDE DEATH RATE.

				This Area.	England & Wales.
1944	...	...	...	12.23	11.6
1943	...	...	...	12.4	12.1
1942	...	...	...	14.76	11.6
1941	...	...	...	13.98	12.9
1940	...	...	...	12.9	14.3
1939	...	...	...	10.6	12.1

It is still not possible to secure Area Comparability Factors—the effect of applying Comparability Factors in pre-war years was to reduce the Death Rate of this area—that is, the Standardised Death Rate in this area is usually lower than the Crude Death Rate,



## CAUSES OF DEATH.

There were no deaths from Typhoid, Cerebro-spinal Fever, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Measles, Polio-myelitis, Encephalitis, or Infantile Diarrhoea.

There were, according to the Registrar General (Form SD 30—cols. 29 and 30) 2 deaths due to or following upon child-bearing or child-birth, compared with nil for the previous 2 years, 1 in 1941, and nil during 1940 and 1939. These 2 deaths would give a maternal mortality rate of 11.2 per 1,000 births (live and still-births). I personally can find record of only 1 maternal death—Post partum Haemorrhage, 12th December, 1944, aged 26, Inward Transfer from Newtown U.D., 616/3/341 Dec.

There were 11 deaths from Cancer (7 males and 4 females) compared with 19 for 1943, 27 for 1942, and 13 for each of the years 1941, 1940, and 1939. These 11 deaths give a death rate from Cancer of 1.12 per 1,000 population for the year.

From the accompanying table it will be seen that the chief causes of death were:—Heart Disease, 37; Intracranial Vascular Lesions, 17; Other Diseases of Circulatory System, 2; so that diseases of the Heart and Circulatory System accounted for 56 deaths compared with 43 for the previous year, that is almost half of the total deaths. Bronchitis and Pneumonia (Respiratory Diseases) accounted for 12 deaths, compared with 18 for the previous year.

## CAUSES OF DEATH.

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Whooping Cough ... ..	—	1	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ... ..	2	—	2
Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis ... ..	1	1	2
Syphylitic Diseases ... ..	—	1	1
Influenza ... ..	2	1	3
Cancer of Uterus ... ..	—	1	1
Cancer of Stomach ... ..	—	1	1



Cancer of all other Sites	...	...	7	2	9
Diabetes	...	...	0	1	1
Inter Cranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	6	11	17
Heart Disease	...	...	17	20	37
Other diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	1	1	2
Bronchitis	...	...	3	—	3
Pneumonia	...	...	5	4	9
Ulcer of Stomach	...	...	1	—	1
Appendicitis	...	...	1	—	1
Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	1	1	2
Nephritis	...	...	5	3	8
Puerperal Disease	...	...	—	1	1
Other Natural Causes	...	...	—	1	1
Premature Birth	...	...	3	—	3
Congenital Malformations, etc.	...	...	—	2	2
Suicide	...	...	3	—	3
Road Traffic Accident	...	...	—	1	1
Other Violent Causes	...	...	2	—	2
All Other Causes	...	...	3	3	6
			—	—	—
<b>Totals</b>	...	...	63	57	120

#### AGES AT DEATH.

Age Period.	Males.	Females.	Total.
0— 1 year	3	3	6
1— 5 years	—	1	1
5—15	2	1	3
15—25	2	—	2
25—35	1	2	3
35—45	3	1	4
45—55	6	2	8
55—65	10	8	18
65—75	15	15	30
75—85	15	16	31
85—95	6	8	14
Over 95	—	—	—
	—	—	—
<b>Totals</b>	63	57	120

It will be seen that again this year well over a third of the total number of deaths were those of persons over 75 years of age (45 out of 120, that is 37.5 per cent.), and well over a half were those of persons over 65 (75 out of a total of 120), actually 62.5 per cent.

### TUBERCULOSIS.

During the year 10 new cases of Tuberculosis were notified, 3 males (all pulmonary), and 7 females (5 pulmonary). This compares with 16 new cases last year. Of these 9 were males (5 pulmonary and 4 non-pulmonary); 7 were females (6 pulmonary, and 1 non-pulmonary).

In addition to the 3 notified male cases, 1 male pulmonary case moved into the district from another Sanitary Authority area, and 1 male non-pulmonary case was found to be non-tuberculous within a month of his notification. These two cases are not included in the table that follows, and which shows the age and sex distribution of the 10 new cases.

Age Group.	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	Male.	Female.	Female only.	
15—25 years	2	1	—	
25—45 „	—	3	1	
45—65 „	1	1	1	
	—	—	—	
Totals	3	5	2	

These 10 new cases were distributed among the Parishes in the Council's area as follows:—

Aberafesp—1 male Pulmonary, 1 female Pulmonary.

Carno—1 male Pulmonary.

Llangurig—1 female Pulmonary.

Llanidloes Without—1 female Pulmonary.

Llanllugan—1 female Pulmonary.

Llanwnnog—1 male Pulmonary, 1 female Pulmonary, 1 female Non-Pulmonary.

Trefeglwys—1 female Non-Pulmonary.

This year the figures do not follow the trend shown in my last two Annual Reports as to the relative incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis in the different parishes; but the non-pulmonary form complies with the previous trend

There were four deaths from Tuberculosis during the year—3 males and 1 female. Two were from the Pulmonary form and 2 from the Non-Pulmonary. The following table shows the age and sex distribution of these four deaths:—

Age Group.	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	Male only.		Male.	Female
25—45	...	—	—	1
45—65	...	1	—	—
65—85	...	1	1	—
	—	—	—	—
	2		1	1

The figures for notifications of and deaths from tuberculosis for 1944 are the best for many years. This is very satisfactory, especially as it was a year of stress and war, but it is yet too early to know or believe that it marks the beginning of a continuous or sustained improvement.

The following summarises

#### THE STATE OF THE REGISTER OF CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS.

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Total.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
On Register, Dec 31, 1943	32	26	13	6	45	32
Deduct deaths, 1944 ...	2	—	1	1	3	1
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	30	26	12	5	42	31
Less Recovered 1944 ...	—	—	1	1	1	1
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	30	26	11	4	41	30

Less Died from other causes 1944 ...	—	1	1	—	1	1
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	30	25	10	4	40	29
Less moved out of area	2	3	1	1	3	4
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	28	22	9	3	37	25
Add moved into area ...	1	—	—	—	1	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—
	29	22	9	3	38	25
Add Verified Notifications 1944 ...	3	5	—	2	3	7
	—	—	—	—	—	—
On Register Dec 31, 1944	32	27	9	5	41	32
	—	—	—	—	—	—

#### NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following notifications were received during the year (the previous 4 years are also given for comparison):—

	1944.	1943.	1942.	1941.	1940.
Scarlet Fever ...	14	14	3	10	10
Whooping Cough ...	31	1	10	12	8
Diphtheria ...	—	—	4	3	2
Erysipelas ...	2	4	6	6	3
Measles ...	45	29	6	105	213
Pneumonia ...	14	23	21	39	35
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	2	—	—	1	—
	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	108	71	50	181	276

The total absence of Diphtheria for the second successive year is particularly gratifying, and should encourage all parents to ensure that their children are immunised against this once much-dreaded and ever prevalent disease. No child's first birthday should pass without arrangements being made for its receiving the prophylactic injections against Diphtheria—this is the best birthday present the child can receive—and it is **FREE**.

## GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

1.—The Public Health Staff of your Council consists of the Medical Officer of Health (part-time only) and a qualified Sanitary Inspector, Mr. H. H. Thomas, who is a whole-time Officer, and whose report is attached hereto. Of late much work (some of it of a non-technical character, e.g. paper salvage), has been allotted to Mr. Thomas simply because there is no other Officer available. Owing to the numerous other duties imposed upon him it is increasingly difficult for Mr. Thomas to find sufficient time to devote to his specialised work, especially when it is remembered what a vast area he has to cover (236 sq. miles).

2.—THE HOBOUSE REPORT on Rural Housing was published in 1944, and its recommendations adopted and accepted by the Government. One of its main recommendations concerns the carrying out of a comprehensive survey of housing conditions in rural areas, and the classification of houses into 4 defined groups. Even if this survey were confined to houses under a certain rateable value, if it is to be completed within 12 months it will be necessary for the Council to appoint at least 2 technical assistants to conduct this survey. The Technical Sub-Committee appointed by the Montgomeryshire Joint Committee on Rural Housing in their report dated 30th November, 1944, state that it appears necessary to appoint 1 person per 1,000 houses in order to complete the Survey within 12 months. With demobilisation proceeding, and official priority given for discharge of persons for this purpose, I would urge the Council to take immediate steps to secure and appoint 2 technical officers to carry out this survey. Without the detailed information which can only be discovered by means of this survey, no long-term Housing Programme can be formulated by the Council or submitted to the Ministry of Health, and I believe that the Survey will reveal a highly unsatisfactory state of affairs in this area, and that an unduly large proportion of houses in

this area will be classified in categories 3 and 4 — that is ‘Houses requiring re-conditioning’ and ‘Houses requiring demolition and replacement.’

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE AREA

3.—These remained unchanged throughout the area, and the details and suggestions contained in my last annual report still apply.

4.—CAERSWS: The high iron and manganese content of the piped water in Caersws continues to cause trouble to the consumers and the pipes, and nothing short of treating the water at the cost of several thousands of pounds will remedy it. I still maintain that the best policy would be to scrap the whole pumping system as soon as an alternative supply is available, and that the Council should do all in its power to expedite the procuring of an alternative supply.

5.—You may recall that in my last 2 annual reports I strongly advocated that the solution to the very great difficulties of providing this Council’s area with a much needed adequate and satisfactory water supply should be found—to quote from my last annual report—“in basing the scheme upon as large an area as possible—the boundaries of the area being the natural mountain barriers, every part of the area within these mountain barriers being supplied from one source, or, if supplied from more than one source, each being linked with the other, so as to help each other over temporary difficulties. I would recommend the Council to pursue this policy and try to secure the largest possible area as the unit for water supply—the area might embrace even adjoining counties or part of them. The more comprehensive the scheme the wider the spread of costs, and efficiency and purity would be more easily obtained. The larger the scheme the more likely it is to attract really substantial Government grants, without which I fear it will be impossible to secure water supplies for Rural Areas. Given water, then we can proceed with Sewerage Schemes.”



Again, to quote from my Annual Report of 1942: "It may be found more practicable to supply the many hamlets and parishes spread throughout the various Council areas from one, two or more sources in the County rather than for each Council to arrange for several small water-supply schemes in its own area. . . . This area has plenty of potential supplies; for example, making an impounding reservoir above Llawryglyn, using the source of the Trannon as a catchment area. There are numerous other supplies in this area."

6—During the year there have been 2 important developments on the lines I advocated:—

#### FIRST RURAL SUPPLIES & SEWERAGE ACT, 1944.

CLAUSE 1 enables the Minister of Health to make grants to local authorities to a total of £15,000,000 in England and Wales, in aid of the provision or improvement of water supply and for the provision of sewerage in rural localities.

CLAUSE 2 requires the County Council to make a grant (not exceeding that given under Clause 1) to the R.D.C. for these works or services.

CLAUSE 3 requires a Rural District Council to provide a supply of wholesome water in pipes to every rural locality in their district in which there are houses or schools, and to take the pipes to points which will enable the houses or schools to be connected there to at a reasonable cost—provided that the local authority (in our case the R.D.C.) shall not be required to do anything which is not practicable at a reasonable cost.

Any question whether the provision is or is not "practicable at a reasonable cost" shall be determined by the Ministry of Health (via Welsh Board of Health) at the request of the County Council or of 10 or more local government electors in the district concerned.



CLAUSe 6 requires that all expenses incurred by a R.D.C. in connection with water supply or sewerage in so far as they fall to be defrayed out of rates, shall be general expenses—that is the expense shall *not* fall simply on the parishes concerned, but shall be spread equally between all the parishes of the R.D.C.

Extensions of mains carried out with the primary object of affording supplies to agriculture will not in themselves rank for grant under the Act, though any cost falling on the landowner or farmer may rank for such grants as may be available from the Ministry of Agriculture.

Although the Government grant under this Act is a very niggardly one, maybe the new government will see the wisdom of increasing the total specified (£15,000,000) to a *very* much higher figure (in my opinion it should be at least 3 times this amount), I hope that it will enable the Council to proceed with consideration of schemes for supplying piped supplies of wholesome water throughout the area, in order that well-conceived plans may be presented to the Ministries and attract really substantial grants both directly from the Ministry of Health and indirectly from the Ministry of Agriculture, and so cater both for the houses in the villages and hamlets and for the majority of farms which need water and are within reasonable distance of main roads.

#### REPORT ON WATER SUPPLY.

7.—The other important development is the REPORT ON WATER SUPPLY (dated 31st August, 1945), presented by Major A. H. S. Waters, V.C., to the Montgomery County Council. You will recall that following a conference in 1943, all the Councils in the County delegated their powers as Water Authorities to the County Council to the extent of enabling the County Council to have a comprehensive survey made of the water resources of the County. The result is the valuable report by Major Waters. This report proves that the plan of basing water supply scheme upon as large an area

as possible is a sound one from an expert water-engineer's point of view. Whatever other Councils may have to say about this report, I trust that THIS Council will press for its speedy adoption and implementation,—provided Government grants are sufficiently generous to make it financially possible, that the necessary preliminary guagings prove that there is a sufficiency of supply, and that the quality of the water is satisfactory. The last stipulation applies most particularly, if not exclusively, in my opinion, to the proposed supply from Llyn Mawr.

8.—It will be noted that 2 out of the 3 sources recommended by Major Waters for the supply of water for that part of the County in the Severn Catchment Area—which in area is about 5-6ths of the County and caters for about 7/8ths of the population—are situated within THIS Council's area, Intake No. 1 being taken from the Clewedog near Ystrad-hynod in the Parish of Llanidloes Without, and the Source No. 3 being Llyn Mawr in the Parish of Llanwnnog. This, together with the fact that the existing reservoirs for both Newtown and Llanidloes towns are within the area of this Council, demonstrates that there is more than ample water within our own area to supply the needs of our district. But we lack the means of distributing it and supplying it where it is wanted.

9.—Major Waters's scheme would supply water to almost every parish and hamlet in this Council's area. I am in doubt regarding Llangurig village — its altitude (about 900ft. A.O.D.) and the road between Llangurig and Cwmbelan is at an even higher elevation—(960 in parts)—would probably make it impracticable to supply Llangurig from the Clewedog source, whose elevation would be about 816ft. A.O.D., and the pipe-line could not be taken further than Cwmbelan from Llanidloes in south-western direction. However, Llangurig fortunately lends itself to an independent supply, and I would suggest that a water engineer should be empowered to make a report on the best means of providing Llangurig

with a piped water supply. I believe that this could easily be obtained in Llangurig.

10.—The other parts of this district lying at a high elevation are Llanwyddelan and Llanllugan; these would be served from the Llyn Mawr Source, provided that water proved satisfactory in quantity and quality, and owing to the high elevation of the source (1276ft. A.O.D.) would not prove difficult.

11.—The present position as regards water supply is highly unsatisfactory *throughout* the whole of the Council's area. It is causing almost insurmountable difficulties to all building and housing projects and improvements, and makes improved and cleaner milk production and farming generally very difficult. It causes much dissatisfaction among the people throughout the Council's area and is a potent factor in causing the drift from rural areas to the towns, and, if continued, will cause still further depopulation of this district. Men and women returning from the services will not be satisfied with a continuation of lack of elementary amenities, of which a plentiful supply of pure water is the first. Clause 3 of the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act 1944 enables any 10 Local Government Electors to appeal to the Ministry of Health (Welsh Board of Health) as to whether the provision by the R.D.C.'s of "a supply of wholesome water in pipes" to any sizeable collection of houses "is practicable at a reasonable cost." I believe that this right of appeal would be utilised in many localities in this area unless something is done fairly soon. Whatever the outcome of these appeals they would cause friction and expense and maybe cause the Council to embark on several small, petty and unsatisfactory schemes whose total costs would in the aggregate involve the Council in considerable expense and result in unco-ordinated, unsupervised, untreated and generally unsatisfactory supplies (10 to 20 or more in number) all of which would have to be scrapped at some later date when the adoption of the more comprehensive scheme would be forced upon the Council by circumstances or Government decrees.

12.—As Major Waters' scheme would supply water sufficient in quantity and satisfactory in quality to almost every part of this Council's area (with the exception of Llangurig whose peculiar difficulties should be easy of solution) and eventually to *every farm* of reasonable elevation and which is reasonably near a main road, I would strongly advise and urge this Council to do all in its power to secure the adoption of Major Waters' Report, and to ensure that the scheme is carried out with the least possible delay.

13.—If Major Waters' scheme should be rejected by the County. I would suggest that the Council engage a Water-engineer to advise them whether a smaller but in many respects similar scheme which I have had in mind for some time and recorded in my 1942 Annual Report could not be made to serve a large portion of this Council's area. An intake from the Trannon about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles above Llawryglyn at an elevation of about 1,000-ft. A.O.D. properly piped would supply Llawryglyn, Trefeglwys (branch line to the Van), Caersws. with branch N.West to Carno and Llanwnnog, and Aberhafesp and another branch S.W. to Llandinam, Dolwen and also to Penstrowed. This would serve all the houses and farms lying between the places mentioned. This scheme could be made part of a larger county scheme on the lines of Major Waters' report should that materialise at a later date, or could be used to augment it at any time, but the mains from Caersws to Llandinam and Penstrowed would have to be replaced by larger ones. The water would probably have to be treated at the Intake, but a duplication of screening, filtration, and chlorination plants is not desirable, and I do not advise this intake as an addition to that on the Clewedog, but only as an alternative for consideration should Major Waters' scheme be rejected by the county.

14. — Further I respectfully suggest that Trefeglwys would be better served in a county scheme by a pipeline running from Caersws than by a pipeline branching from Llanidloes as shown in Major Waters' map. This would avoid



the high elevation of the road (near Gelli-lefrith) between Llanidloes and Cerist (Trefeglwys), and would prove more profitable as there are more and bigger houses on the Caersws route. The line should naturally be extended to Llawryglyn. But these are only details which Major Waters would doubtless modify.

## SEWERAGE.

15.—THE SEWERAGE of the 10 villages in the Council's area is in an even more deplorable state than the water-supply, in fact *only* 3 of the villages—Llandinam, Kerry and Llangurig—have any sewerage system, and even in these 3 villages such systems as there are are very unsatisfactory if functioning at all and serve only a proportion of the houses. The provision of water-supply would make sewerage systems still more urgently necessary and should be considered in conjunction with water-supply schemes.

16.—The drainage and sewerage in Caersws remain in the same unsatisfactory condition as reported for several years previously. There is no sewerage of the village as a whole—the school and a small minority of the houses have water-lavatories with cess-pits or septic tanks. Caersws, with its 169 houses is the largest village in the Council's area, and a large portion of the village is subject to periodical flooding. It should therefore claim the Council's priority for sewerage system. The Council has tried several times to arrange for the removal of night soil from the village but has failed to secure any person willing to undertake the work.

17.—Llandinam, with approximately 60 houses, is probably the next largest village in the area. Such sewerage system as exists in this village is very unsatisfactory and it is doubtful whether the disposal works are functioning in any way. The works, etc., are privately owned. Many of the houses in the village are not connected to the poor system that exists.

18.—Llandinam and Caersws are only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles apart, and Mr. A. D. Johnson, Civil Engineer, whom the Council instructed to investigate and report on the sewerage and sewage disposal of these 2 villages, has advised the adoption of a combined scheme for both villages rather than each village being dealt with separately. I know that the Council is giving Mr. Johnson's report careful consideration, and I would recommend the Council to adopt it, and to get the necessary works started without delay. There are no obstacles other than financial considerations to the carrying out of this scheme; both Llandinam and Caersws have the necessary water supply and electric power—fortunately the *nature* of the water (in the case of Caersws) is of little importance in a sewerage scheme.

19.— This sewerage scheme is not dependent upon the adoption of Major Waters' scheme for the County water supply, and need not be delayed while that is being considered. Nevertheless if and when the County water supply reaches Llandinam and Caersws, it will enhance the usage and need of this sewerage scheme. The completion of the two schemes would enable the Council and private builders to erect houses in an area where they are desperately needed, but where hitherto the difficulties of water supply and sewerage have proved a great deterrent. The Welsh Board of Health's reluctance to allow the building of even the 8 new Swedish houses at Caersws shows how this will hold up their sanction of our entire building scheme there of a further 30 to 50 houses. This shows that it is essential to proceed at once with a sewerage scheme—present and future needs cry out for it.

20.—If it is proved that LLANGURIG will need to be provided with a water supply entirely independent of and apart from the large County scheme, then a proper sewerage system should be installed there at the same time as the water-supply and need not wait for the County water supply.

21.—The sewerage at KERRY needs much attention, and recommend the Council to seek expert advice before embarking upon any extension or alteration of the system there.

### HOUSING.

22.—HOUSING: Resulting from the war-time *agricultural housing scheme*, 8 cottages for agricultural workers have been built—4 at Trefeglwys and 4 at Sarn. The building of these 8 houses proved the extreme difficulty of building in a period of acute shortage of labour and materials, and gave us an indication of the resulting high costs: they also forcibly brought to the forefront the difficulties of water-supply and sewerage, and should strengthen the case for a comprehensive water supply.

23.—THE POST-WAR HOUSING SCHEME described in my last Annual Report has in some respects been advanced further—that is, a number of the suggested sites have been inspected by a large number of officials, and have been approved of by the required Authorities—5 or 6 in number. Your Architect, Mr. Brian Cooper, has drawn up site-plans for those places which have obtained the approval of these various departments. As a first instalment it is now hoped that the Council will within 2 or 3 months be able to start building the following—12 houses at Llandinam, 16 at Kerry, 8 at Bettws, together with 8 Swedish Timber Houses at Caersws almost immediately and 24 brick houses a little later. The sites at Carno, Llangurig, Llawryglyn, and Tregynon are still under consideration, but should soon obtain official approval.

24.—The development of the Council's building programme at Caersws is dependent upon the adoption of a Sewage scheme for the village; the 8 Swedish houses now to be built will be sewered into the already overloaded system provided for the existing Council houses at Maesydinas, but this can only be a temporary measure. If Caersws is properly sewered and given a good water supply, 60 new houses



could be built on the high ground the Council proposes to buy, and doubtless many others would be built by private enterprise.

25.—THE LONG-TERM HOUSING PROGRAMME for the area can only be formulated after the Housing-survey previously mentioned has been completed and the water-supply position ascertained. If the County water scheme is proceeded with then many more houses will be required *throughout* the area. But if the County water scheme is not adopted, this Council will be faced with providing one or two large schemes independently of the neighbouring Councils (e.g. see paragraph 3) or several smaller schemes to supply at least the 10 villages in its area. As the Minister of Health will almost certainly require such supplies to be filtered and chlorinated before approving them for domestic use, and to enable them to qualify for Government grant, the number of supplies in any district should be limited to as few as possible, as the supervision of a larger number of small supplies is a difficult matter and to be avoided if possible. Once these 10 villages are given proper piped water supplies each of them will have to be provided with proper sewage disposal works.

26.—However prosperous the state of agriculture generally it can make no headway locally unless the contentment of the agricultural worker is secured—and that cannot be achieved unless the worker is decently housed. We cannot have decent houses without proper water supply and sewerage. It is obvious, as pointed out in the Scott, Uthwatt and Hobhouse Reports, that in an area like this where agriculture is the only industry, that

- a. Prosperity in agriculture,
- b. higher wages for agricultural workers, with improvement in their rent-paying capacity, and
- c. better housing, with water supply and sewerage, are

each dependent upon the other, and that failure in any one of these three factors would result in the failure of the other two.

27.—One of the main recommendations of the Hobhouse Report was the formation of a *Rural Housing Joint Committee* in every County. Such a committee was formed following a Conference between the County Council (Public Health and Housing Committee) and representatives of the 4 Rural District Councils of this County, held on 10th October, 1944. At that Conference a Technical Sub-Committee was also appointed, and this Technical Sub-Committee presented its report on 30th November, 1944. This report was considered at a meeting of the Joint Committee on 11th January, 1945. I am not aware that there has been any meeting of the Joint Committee after 11th January, 1945, and I fear that the Joint Committee will find itself powerless to make any progress until the recommendations of its Technical Sub-Committee have been approved of and acted upon by the individual Councils. Briefly these are—the engagement of additional staff by the Councils to enable the comprehensive survey of housing conditions to be made in their area and a proper classification and recording of the results.

28.—It is not intended that the County Joint Committee should supersede the Councils, nor that the Councils should be relieved of their responsibilities under the Housing Acts by delegating their duties to this committee. The Joint Committee is meant to ensure co-ordination between the Councils and the acceptance of uniform standards, and the securing of better progress in backward areas. It is hoped that the Joint Committee for the County will soon show signs of some activity.

29.—It should be realised that the houses to be built in the first post-war year on the sites already approved of or now under consideration by the different Ministries do not

form part of the long term housing policy of the Council—they are the minimum immediate requirements which are so obvious that there is no need of a survey to demonstrate their necessity.

Although it is true that it may be some time before the Council can start on its long-term programme, and that building will be dependent on the availability of labour and material and that badly blitzed areas are likely to have the first call upon these, it still is of the utmost importance that the programme should be ready, and the preliminary survey and negotiations completed, so that there shall be no undue delay in commencing the programme when conditions permit.

30.—The *Flooding at Caersws* continues to prove troublesome and to cause injury to the health of the people. In my report of 13th July, 1945, I gave reasons for my belief that the flooding of Caersws constituted a Statutory Nuisance within the meaning of the Public Health Act, 1936, in that it is prejudicial to the health of the people, and that it admits of a remedy. The permission of the Welsh Board of Health to the Council's seeking expert advice as to the remedy and for the payment of that expert was sought, but the Board's reply was not altogether favourable. The sanction of the Welsh Board of Health to the engagement of an engineer to advise the Council on the matter should again be sought.

31.—There is need of *improved ambulance transport* for sick, injured, and infectious cases. I understand that a County Conference of interested parties and responsible authorities is to be called soon, and I recommend the Council to secure better ambulance service in co-operation with the other authorities (Public Health Act, 1936, Section 197).

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

1.—The appointment of two assistant Sanitary Inspectors or Technical Officers to carry out a comprehensive hous-

ing survey of the district (paragraphs 2 and 27). It should be remembered that half the salary of these officers would be recovered in Government grant.

2.—That the Council adopt Mr. Johnson's scheme (or some modification of it) for the Sewerage of Caersws and Llandinam and get the work completed as soon as possible. (Note: It is not necessary to wait for consideration or adoption of Major Waters' Report before deciding upon Mr. Johnson's scheme).

3.—That the Council seek expert advice upon sewerage at Kerry.

4.—That the Council should press for the *speedy* adoption of Major Waters' Report on Water Supply for the County, and should do its utmost to secure an *early* completion of the works suggested in that Report (Paragraphs 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12).

5.—That the Council should consider schemes for providing piped supplies of water and sewage disposal plants to all sizeable collections of houses throughout its area in accordance with the requirements of the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944 (Paragraph 6).

6.—That an engineer be engaged to report on the best means of providing Llangurig with a piped water supply and sewage system (Paragraphs 9 and 20).

7.—If Major Waters' scheme is rejected by the County that this Council engage an engineer to advise on an alternative scheme (Paragraph 13).

8.—That the Council again seek permission of the Welsh Board of Health to the engagement of an engineer to advise on means of minimising the flooding of Caersws.

In concluding, I take this opportunity of expressing my

appreciation of the Council's interest and co-operation in safeguarding and advancing the health of their district, and my thanks to the Sanitary Inspector for his valuable service.

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Bronbechan,  
Tregynon.

November, 1945.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit a Summary of the conditions existing and the work of the Department for the year ending December, 1944.

Number of Inspections and visits made ... ..	637
Infectious Diseases. Number of visits ... ..	16
Number of Premises disinfected ... ..	11
Number of Visits and Inspections under the Milk and Dairies Orders ... ..	423
Number of Visits and Inspections under the Fac- tories, Food and Drugs Acts ... ..	39
Number of Milk Samples submitted for Bacteriologi- cal examination ... ..	351
Number of Water Samples submitted for Bacteriologi- cal examination ... ..	33
Number of Water Samples submitted for Chemical examination ... ..	1
During the year 42 Informal Notices were served.	

**FOOD INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION.** — Periodic visits were made to Food premises and generally the conditions were found to be satisfactory. The distribution of the Meat supplies to the district continues to take place from the abattoirs at Llanidloes and Newtown. The sampling of



Foods under the Food and Drugs Act is undertaken by the County Authorities.

The following Foods were found to be unfit for consumption and condemned during the year:—

127 lbs. of lamb, 12 lbs. of tinned meat, 3 jars of pickles,  
5 tins of milk, 6 packets of cereals.

**MILK.**—The number of premises on the register under the Milk and Dairies Order is 322. During the year 12 premises were registered for the production of milk for sale. The number of samples taken from Retailer-Producers and submitted for Bacteriological examination was 351; of this number 236 samples were placed in Class A, 52 samples placed in Class B, and 63 samples in Class C. The sampling of the producers selling milk wholesale is undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries at the receiving depots.

During the year 16 producers were granted licences to produce "Tuberculin Tested" milk, and 5 producers granted licences for the production of "Accredited" milk.

**WATER SUPPLIES.**—I regret that I am unable to report any improvement in the chemical characteristics of the Caersws water, which remains similar to that of previous years. Many of the consumers continue to carry water for drinking and other purposes from the nearby wells; the water is definitely unsuitable for many of the requirements for which it is required.

During the year 35 samples of water from various sources throughout the district were submitted for examination, the results showing that 18 samples were satisfactory, and 16 proved to be unsatisfactory. The result of one sample sent for chemical examination was good. The high percentage of the samples submitted, which is 45.7 per cent., which

proved to be unsatisfactory indicate that the water supplies throughout the district are in a deplorable condition from the point of purity; the quantity available falls very much short of that which would be regarded as adequate supplies.

REFUSE COLLECTION. — The Council undertake the collection of refuse from Caersws, the work being done under contract. Efforts were made during the year to combine the collection of the household refuse and nightsoil, but the Council's efforts in this direction were unsuccessful.

The Council have provided a site in one village, namely Kerry, for the deposit of dry refuse, but the distance of the site from the village is such that full use of it is not made, the villagers having to carry the refuse a distance of approximately a quarter of a mile.

The problem confronting householders regarding the means of disposing of this type of waste is serious in many parts of the district, and I feel that the time is not far distant that the problem will have to be faced by you and means and ways considered what can be done in the various villages for the provision of sites where householders can deposit household refuse.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

H. H. THOMAS.







